NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
NEWS ANALYSIS 1-1176 JULY 29, 1976
JOSEPH SULLIVAN

FRASER VISIT WRAPUP

ANNCR:

AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER MALCOLM FRASER HAS JUST CONCLUDED A FOUR-DAY VISIT TO WASHINGTON...AND VOA NEWS ANALYST JOSEPH SULLIVAN HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS ON THE OCCASION.

VOICE:

MISTER FRASER GOES (WENT) FROM WASHINGTON TO HARVARD UNIVERSITY TO INAUGURATE A CHAIR OF AUSTRALIAN STUDIES -- HIS COUNTRY'S MAJOR BICENTENNIAL GIFT TO THE UNITED STATES. LIKE HIS CALL THERE, THE AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER'S FIRST VISIT TO WASHINGTON SINCE ASSUMING OFFICE ALSO WAS IN LARGE PART CEREMONIAL. FOR THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT THERE WERE NO MAJOR PROBLEMS IN U.S.-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS TO BE RESOLVED. NEVERTHELESS, MISTER FRASER HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS A WIDE RANGE OF GLOBAL ISSUES.

CERTAINLY HIGH ON THE AGENDA WAS THE SUBJECT OF GREAT POWER RELATIONS IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION. IN WELCOMING THE AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER, PRESIDENT FORD NOTED THAT MISTER FRASER IS DEEPLY CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED TO PRESERVE A BALANCE AMONG THE GREAT POWERS IN ASIA. INDEED, THIS HAS BEEN ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS SINCE THE COMMUNIST TAKEOVER IN INDOCHINA. IN THIS REGARD, MISTER FRASER HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY OUTSPOKEN ON THE GROWING SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE AREA, PARTICULARLY INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. REFERRING TO THE CONCEPT OF A NEUTRAL ZONE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, HE TOLD A PRESS GATHERING IN WASHINGTON, THAT WHILE THE OBJECTIVE IS AN ADMIRABLE ONE, IT HAS LITTLE CHANCE OF REALIZATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASING ITS NAVAL PRESENCE IN SOUTH

ASIA. MOSCOW'S ACTIONS, HE HAS OBSERVED, ALL TOO OFTEN APPEAR INCONSISTENT WITH THE AIM OF REDUCING WORLD TENSIONS.

MISTER FRASER HAS ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT DOMESTIC POLITICS IN THE UNITED STATES ARE WEAKENING ITS ROLE IN THE WORLD. AND HE'S URGED THE UNITED STATES TO DEVELOP A STRONG NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN TO COUNTER THE INCREASING SOVIET BUILDUP IN THOSE WATERS. CERTAINLY AUSTRALIA'S OWN SMALL NAVY IS UNABLE TO INSURE CONTROL OF SUPPLY LINES ACROSS THE INDIAN OCEAN -- OR, FOR THAT MATTER, IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN, ON ITS EAST. THE FRASER GOVERN MENT HAS THUS DONE MUCH TO COOPERATE WITH THE UNITED STATES ON JOINT DEFENSE MATTERS, INCLUDING THE OPENING OF AUSTRALIAN PORTS TO U.S. NUCLEAR-POWERED WARSHIPS.

PRESIDENT FORD USED THE OCCASION OF MISTER FRASER'S VISIT TO PRAISE AUSTRALIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO STABILITY AND PROGRESS IN THE ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION. AMONG OTHER THINGS, HE WAS REFERRING TO AUSTRALIA'S COOPERATION WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS TO MAKE THAT ORGANIZATION A VIABLE INSTRUMENT OF PEACE AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN THE REGION. (OPT) AUSTRALIA ALSO HAS A GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES IN BOTH SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA. SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR TWO, AUSTRALIA'S EXPENDITURES ON FOREIGN AID HAVE EXCEEDED TWO THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS...RANKING IT FOURTH IN THE WORLD BY PERCENTAGE OF NATIONAL INCOME DEVOTED TO ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. (END OPT

PRIME MINISTER FRASER IS ONLY ONE OF MANY WORLD LEADERS WHO ARE VISITING THE UNITED STATES DURING THIS COUNTRY'S BICENTENNIAL YEAR. BUT, IN ONE RESPECT, HIS VISIT HAS A SPECIAL MEANING FOR ALL AMERICANS. IN THE PAST GENERATION AMERICANS HAVE FOUGHT

THREE MAJOR WARS IN ASIA. AND IN ALL THREE CONFLICTS AUSTRALIAN TROOPS WERE AT THEIR SIDE. IN THEIR TOASTS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS THIS WEEK, PRESIDENT FORD AND HIS AUSTRALIAN VISITOR HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED STATES HAVE LEARNED THE HARD WAY THAT THEIR WELL-BEING DEPENDS UPON PEACE IN THE PACIFIC AND THAT PEACE CANNOT BE MAINTAINED UNLESS BOTH COUNTRIES PLAY AN ACTIVE PART IN THAT EFFORT.

-0-

GH/CAK